



## **USAID Quarterly Report**

### **PERU: SUPPORT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN PERU THROUGH INTERNATIONAL MONITORING OF THE 2001 ELECTION PROCESS**

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**April 1 – June 30, 2001**

#### **I. SUMMARY**

After a protracted political crisis and tense electoral period in Peru, the extraordinary 2001 elections represented a significant accomplishment in returning Peru to the world community of democracies. Hundreds of thousands of Peruvians helped to ensure the integrity of the elections by participating as election officials, political party pollwatchers and nonpartisan election monitors throughout the election process, and the voting and counting processes were peaceful and well organized by the electoral authorities.

To express the support of the international community for legitimate and transparent elections in Peru, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and The Carter Center (TCC) organized two separate international election observation delegations during this reporting period to observe the April 8 presidential and legislative elections and the June 3 run-off presidential election. Both of these 30-member delegations expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the elections and congratulated the transitional government, election authorities, and the Peruvian people for their commitment and cooperation throughout a challenging electoral process.

After the successful second round of elections, NDI and The Carter Center began to make preparations for a final post-electoral assessment mission, scheduled for July 9 to 14. This post-election mission will include a series of meetings with key players involved in the electoral process, as well as a public presentation of a report on the 2001 elections highlighting recommendations for future democratic reforms in Peru.

#### **II. BACKGROUND**

Just over one year ago, Peru was preparing for the April 9, 2000, presidential and legislative elections, in which then-President Alberto Fujimori was running for an unconstitutional third term of office. The circumstances surrounding last year's elections in Peru were among the worst ever observed in this hemisphere by NDI and The Carter Center.

President Fujimori's lack of a clear, democratic mandate contributed to his government's collapse under the weight of scandals related to the illicit activities of his security advisor, Vladimiro Montesinos. When President Fujimori announced in September 2000 his intention to step down within one year, the OAS-brokered dialogue process led to actions by the Peruvian Congress to amend the Constitution in order to hold an extraordinary electoral process in 2001. The opposition then gained leadership of Congress, a development that influenced Fujimori's

decision to resign from office while on a state visit to Asia. Congress refused the President's resignation but proceeded to remove Fujimori from office on grounds of moral incapacity. In accordance with the Constitution, the newly elected President of Congress, Valentin Paniagua, was declared President of the Republic.

After a decade of centralized government and the steady eroding of democratic institutions in Peru, the new government quickly recognized that it was critical for the 2001 elections to rebuild public confidence in the political process. Immediately upon taking office, President Paniagua and his Cabinet Ministers began taking decisive steps to guarantee the neutrality of state institutions, local officials, the armed forces and the forces of public order in this election process. High-level personnel were replaced throughout a wide variety of state institutions, including the military, municipal government, public assistance programs and, of course, the election authorities. Both the President and his Cabinet made a clear public commitment, through official directives, to ensuring the impartiality of government authorities throughout the election process.

Peruvian election authorities faced significant organizational challenges from the outset of the 2001 election process, compounded by a compressed timeframe. Both the National Election Tribunal (*Jurado Nacional de Elecciones*, or JNE) and the National Office of Electoral Processes (*Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales*, or ONPE) worked with primarily new personnel. In the case of the ONPE, more than 75 percent of former employees were replaced with less than four months to go before the April elections.

Eight candidates competed in the presidential campaign during the first round. The three leading candidates throughout the campaign were: Alejandro Toledo, *Peru Posible* (Possible Peru), Lourdes Flores Nano, *Unidad Nacional* (National Unity) and Alan Garcia, APRA (Peruvian Aprista Party). Although Lourdes Flores Nano gained significantly in the polls throughout the first round and appeared poised to be a contender in the run-off election, support for former President Alan Garcia (1985 - 1990) surged in the final week of the campaign, and he edged past Flores Nano by just over one percent on April 8. Since no candidate received more than 50 percent of the popular vote, Peruvian law called for Alejandro Toledo and Alan Garcia to participate in a run-off election.

Delays in officially setting the June 3 election date introduced a degree of uncertainty into the process that contributed to increasing public skepticism in the weeks leading up to the run-off. However, the Peruvian people ultimately sent a clear message of their desire and determination to establish a government based on a democratic electoral mandate.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### *First Election Observation Delegation: April 4 to 10, 2001*

The first-round NDI-Carter Center election observation delegation, which visited Peru from April 4 through 10, included 35 members from 11 countries and was led by Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States; Ramiro de Leon Carpio, former President of Guatemala and current Vice President of Guatemala's Legislative Assembly; Eni Faleomavaega, Member of

the U.S. House of Representatives; and Peter McPherson, President of Michigan State University and former Administrator of USAID under the Reagan Administration.

The delegation held intensive meetings in Lima with a wide range of Peruvian leaders, including President of the Republic Valentin Paniagua; all of the members of the JNE; the head of the ONPE Fernando Tuesta; the Minister of Defense and the Joint Commanders of the Armed Forces; the *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Human Rights Ombudsman's Office); candidates for president and their representatives; representatives of the news media and public opinion research organizations; civic and religious leaders, including leaders of the domestic observation NGO *Transparencia*; the head of the OAS Election Observation Mission in Peru, Eduardo Stein; the head of the European Union Election Observation Mission, Eva Zetterberg; and other representatives of the international community.

Delegates divided into teams and were deployed around the country for meetings in their respective localities. On election day, the teams observed the voting processes in approximately 564 polling stations (*mesas electorales*) and observed the vote counting and tabulation processes in counting centers. The delegation then reconvened in Lima to debrief and later released a statement at a press conference held on April 10, 2001.<sup>1</sup> The delegation report listed seven recommendations concerning the run-up to the second round in the hope of encouraging further improvements to the process, including steps on how to help polls open on time and facilitating other procedures, and the importance of holding a debate between the two candidates in order to allow the electorate to make an informed choice at the ballot box.

The delegation cooperated closely with the election observation missions of the OAS and European Union as well as with *Transparencia* and the *Defensoria del Pueblo*. The delegation noted that, among the visited polling stations, 72 percent functioned well; 26 percent had minimum problems; and only two percent experienced significant problems. These findings were consistent with the qualitative assessment of the election-day process offered by *Transparencia*.

#### *Second Election Observation Delegation: May 30 to June 4, 2001*

The NDI-Carter Center observation delegation for the run-off presidential election, which visited Peru from May 30 to June 4, included 35 members from 12 countries and was led by Madeleine K. Albright, Chairman of NDI and former Secretary of State of the United States; Ramiro de Leon Carpio, former President of Guatemala and current Vice President of Guatemala's Legislative Assembly; Rodrigo Carazo Odio, former President of Costa Rica and president of the International University for Peace; and Sam Gejdenson, former Member of the U.S. House of Representatives and former ranking Member of the House International Relations Committee.

The second-round delegation's activities were substantially similar to those of the first. The delegation held intensive meetings in Lima with a wide range of Peruvian leaders, including President of the Republic Valentin Paniagua; President of the Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister Javier Perez de Cuellar; Minister of Women and Human Development Susana Villaran;

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<sup>1</sup> The April 10 delegation report is attached as Appendix A.

all of the members of the JNE; the head of ONPE, the body responsible for electoral administration, Fernando Tuesta; both presidential candidates, Alejandro Toledo of *Peru Posible* and Alan Garcia of APRA; the candidates' parties' General Secretaries; the *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Human Rights Ombudsman's Office); representatives of the news media and public opinion research organizations; civic, business and religious leaders, including leaders of *Transparencia*; the head of the OAS Election Observation Mission in Peru, Eduardo Stein; the head of the European Union Election Observation Mission, Eva Zetterberg; and other representatives of the international community.

The delegation conducted its activities in accordance with both Peruvian law and international standards for nonpartisan international election observation, and cooperated closely with the election observation missions of the OAS and European Union, as well as with *Transparencia* and the *Defensoria del Pueblo*. Delegates divided into teams and were deployed around the country for meetings in their respective localities. On election day, the teams observed the voting processes in hundreds of polling stations and observed the vote counting and tabulation processes in counting centers. Delegates then reconvened in Lima to debrief and to develop their statement, which was released at a press conference on June 4, 2001.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the original proposal for this international election monitoring program, NDI and TCC suggested that the following results, among others, would serve as indicators that the program was meeting its stated objectives:

- *Oral and written statements made by the NDI/TCC election monitoring project convey the support of the international community for peaceful, transparent and democratic elections;*
- *NDI/TCC delegation statements are cited by other international observer groups;*
- *NDI/TCC delegation statements are widely covered by the Peruvian media;*
- *Potential systematic problems with the electoral preparations noted by the delegations are referred to the appropriate Peruvian bodies;*
- *Issues identified in pre-election assessments are addressed by the authorities; and*
- *The NDI/TCC delegations work in close cooperation with Peruvian election monitoring groups and reference their findings where appropriate.*

Progress toward achieving these results is summarized below.

##### **1. Oral and written statements made by the NDI/TCC election monitoring project convey the support of the international community for peaceful, transparent and democratic elections.**

On April 9 and again on June 4, the election observation missions of NDI and The Carter Center issued public statements on the Peruvian elections. Both of these statements noted one of the primary objectives of the joint election monitoring project: "to express the support of the

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<sup>2</sup> The June 4 delegation statement is attached as Appendix B.

international community for a democratic election process in Peru.” Furthermore, these statements were widely perceived by Peruvians as being genuine, thereby fulfilling the spirit as well as the letter of this result statement.

## **2. NDI/TCC delegation statements are cited by other international observer groups.**

The NDI/TCC observation mission in Peru was consistently consulted by other international observer groups within Peru, including the OAS observer mission and the European Union observer mission, both of which arrived subsequent to the establishment of the NDI/Carter Center field office in Peru. The NDI/Carter Center mission was mentioned in several of the public reports issued by the OAS.

## **3. NDI/TCC delegation statements are widely covered by the Peruvian media.**

The participation of former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright ensured widespread press coverage of both election observation delegations. Both delegations held two press conferences – an opening statement two days before the elections and a post-election conference a day following the elections.

## **4. Potential systematic problems with the electoral preparations noted by the delegations are referred to the appropriate Peruvian bodies**

Although the first-round NDI/Carter Center delegation did not observe serious flaws in the election process, a number of minor concerns were addressed to the appropriate Peruvian bodies through the meetings that the delegation had with representatives of the Peruvian government and election authorities, as well as through the recommendations included in the public report. These concerns included suggestions for polls to open on time and for additional training sessions to be provided to pollworkers and their substitutes; issue orientation and civility in the second round election campaign; and the correction of any remaining problems with vote tabulation and with verification of the computer tabulation software.

## **5. Issues identified in election assessments are addressed by the authorities**

Specifically, the statement of the April election mission included the following recommendations, which were appropriately addressed by the authorities:

**Computer Software for the Vote Tabulation.** The delegation urges the electoral authorities to continue their concerted efforts to correct any remaining problems with the vote tabulation and verification software.

- **Response:** The ONPE contracted a new company for the second-round vote tabulation software and hired a new director of computer systems. All technical complications were resolved, and, on June 3, the tabulation software functioned perfectly.

**Steps to Help Polls Open on Time and Facilitating Other Procedures.** A number of steps should be considered and appropriate actions taken to help ensure that the polls open on time for the second round. Among them are the following: additional training sessions should be offered for pollworkers and their substitutes; pollworkers and substitutes should be required to arrive earlier to the polling stations, so that there is adequate time to complete

preparations for an 8:00 a.m. opening; and security forces should be provided with clear instructions to admit pollworkers and substitutes to polling sites.

- **Response:** The ONPE provided additional training to pollworkers between the two rounds and worked to simplify opening and closing procedures. The June 3 delegation noted an improvement in this regard: polling stations generally opened earlier than during the first round, and there was less confusion during the opening procedures. This was, of course, due in large part to the fact that the same pollworkers were present in the run-off election as in the first round of the elections.

**Issue Orientation and Civility in the Second Round Election Campaign.** The delegation supports the call from *Transparencia* and other civic and religious leaders for the candidates to join in an agreement to conduct their campaigns free from personal attacks and to base their campaigns on the issues that are important to Peru's continued democratic and economic development. The candidates should call on all of their supporters to follow this example, and the news media should concentrate on relevant issues, rather than becoming distracted by smear tactics.

- **Response:** Unfortunately, negative campaigning and scandal-driven news coverage continued throughout the second-round campaign. NDI and The Carter Center issued a press release on May 16 calling again for an issue-oriented campaign in the final weeks leading up to the elections.<sup>3</sup>

**Candidate Debates.** The delegation urges the candidates for the second round to negotiate promptly in order to provide the public with the benefit of seeing the candidates address the issues together in a national debate.

**Response:** There was a nationally televised debate between the two candidates on May 19, organized by *Transparencia*. The event received extensive press coverage and was widely praised as a significant initiative in improving the quality of the campaign.

**Role of Security Forces.** This delegation, as has the two joint NDI/Carter Center pre-election delegations, commended the security forces, including the military, for their political neutrality in the election process. The delegation urges the commanders of these forces and the forces themselves to continue to act in such a professional manner and in accordance with their constitutional duties.

**Response:** Security forces again played an important and responsible role on June 3, as noted in the June 4 statement.

**Broad Citizen Participation.** Additional voter education should be provided to increase understanding of voting procedures and the importance of participating in the process. Broad participation is the best way to ensure the integrity of the process and the furtherance of Peruvian democracy.

**Response:** The ONPE continued its training of pollworkers and intensified voter education efforts during the weeks leading up to the second round, particularly in rural areas and areas where native languages are spoken. In addition, new series of public service voter education advertisements was widely broadcast by the ONPE during the period between the two rounds of the elections.

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<sup>3</sup> The May 16 press release is attached as Appendix C to this report.

**6. The NDI/TCC delegations work in close cooperation with Peruvian election monitoring groups and reference their findings where appropriate.**

Throughout this observation effort, both for the controversial 2000 elections and for this year's extraordinary election process, NDI and The Carter Center have made a sustained effort to support, encourage and publicize the efforts of Peruvian monitoring groups such as *Transparencia* and the *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office). Each of the NDI/Carter Center election observation delegations met with the leaders of these groups, and both public reports praised the positive role that Peruvian monitoring groups are playing in the electoral process. In addition, the observation mission field staff participated consistently in weekly meetings organized by *Transparencia* to evaluate the electoral context. NDI and The Carter Center will again be partnering with *Transparencia* to organize a post-election conference on the democratization of the Peruvian state.

**V. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

NDI and the Carter Center are currently preparing for the upcoming post-election mission, which is scheduled to take place from July 9 to 14, 2001, and will be led by former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo. As part of this post-election mission, NDI and the Carter Center will be co-organizing a conference with the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and *Transparencia*, which will entail a series of panel discussions regarding the recent electoral process, Peru's current status of democracy and electoral and political party reform.